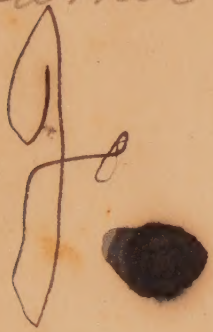
PETER AND POLLY

ROSE · LUCIA

AMERICAN · BOOK · COMPANY

James Boatwright.



PETER AND POLLY IN SUMMER

BY

ROSE LUCIA

PRINCIPAL OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MONTPELIER, VERMONT
AUTHOR OF "STORIES OF AMERICAN DISCOVERERS FOR LITTLE AMERICANS"

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PETER AND POLLY IN SUMMER.
W. P. 3

To

C. M. G.

COMRADE THROUGH MANY LONG HAPPY

SUMMER DAYS IN THE COUNTRY

OF PETER AND POLLY

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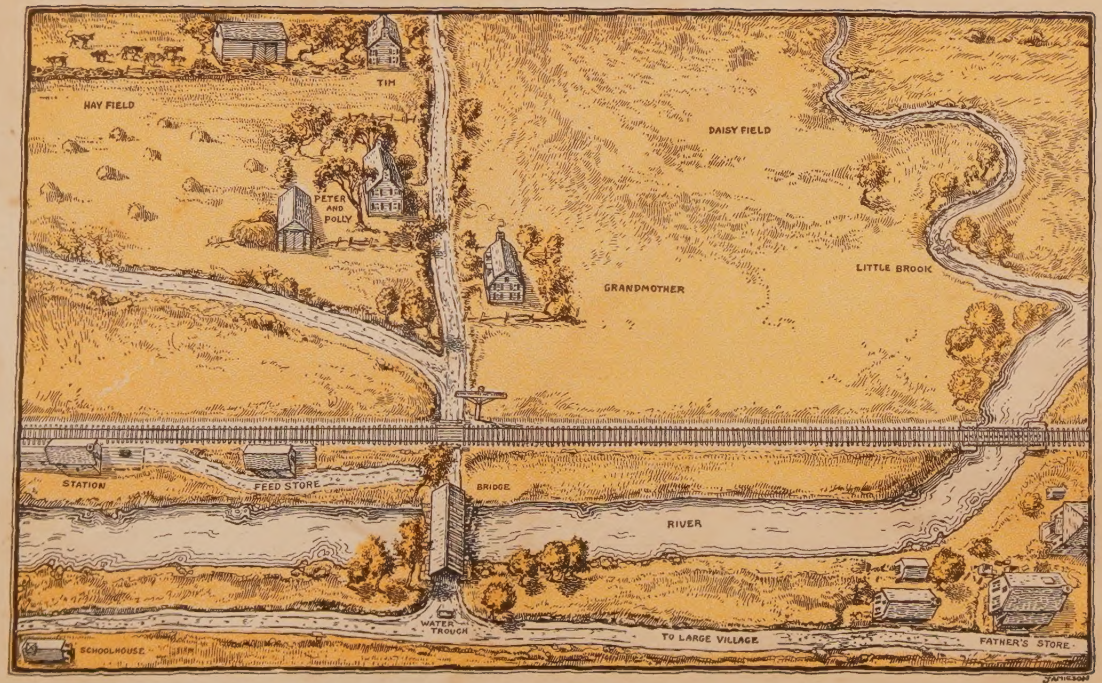


Frontispiece MAP

PETER AND POLLY IN SUMMER

OUR LITTLE FRIENDS

Peter is a small boy. He is now four years old. Polly is his sister. She is three years older than Peter. Can you tell how old she is?

Peter has light hair and blue eyes. Polly has red hair and blue eyes. Polly's hair hangs in curls. Peter's hair is cut too short to make real curls.

Polly has freckles on her face. The sun and the wind help to make them. Peter calls them rust spots.

One day Peter said, "Polly, I can rub off your rust spots."

Polly said, "I will let you try."

Peter took some wet sand. He rubbed Polly's face with it. He rubbed so hard that it hurt.

Then Polly washed her face. She hoped that the freckles would be gone. But they were still there.

Poor Polly's face was red and sore from the hard rubbing. Mother said, "Sand is good for real rust spots. But it is not good for faces."

Polly has lost two teeth. Peter is not old enough to lose his teeth.

His mother keeps them clean and white for him. She brushes them with his little toothbrush.

Polly has to brush her own teeth. She is old enough to do so.

Peter and Polly live in the country. Every fine day in summer they can play in the fields. Every day they can see birds and butterflies.

They know about lambs and sheep and cows. They know about playing in the brook and finding wild flowers.

In winter the snow falls. The fields are covered with snow. The hills are covered with snow. It hides the brooks. Sometimes it hides the fences.

Peter and Polly like to play in the snow. They like to slide downhill. They like to roll snowballs and make snow men.

THEIR HOME

Peter and Polly live in a white house. It has green blinds. There is a barn near it. Look on the map in the front of this book, and you can find the place.

The house is on a hill. So Peter has a hill all his own to slide down.

There is a large yard around the house. In it are many tall elm trees. One elm tree has two long ropes around a big branch.

These ropes hang down and are tied to-

gether at the bottom. What do you think they are for?

Why, put a board between the ropes and sit on the board. Then some one can swing you.

The swing will take you way up into the branches. But you must hang on. That is the way Polly does. Peter cannot swing so high yet.

Peter and Polly have a friend. She is grown up. They call her the Story Lady. The Story Lady knows stories about everything. She taught Polly to say this verse:

How do you like to go up in a swing,
Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it the pleasantest thing
Ever a child can do!

Wag-wag is Peter's dog. He likes to run after the swing. Back and forth, back and forth, he runs.

He barks, and jumps on his hind feet. His little tail goes wag, wag. Perhaps he is asking for a swing.

Sometimes he plays that he will catch Polly's dress. But he never does. He knows that might pull her out of the swing. He likes Polly and he would not hurt her.

So when Polly swings up and down she sings, "Wag-wag, Wag-wag, can't catch me." And the little dog runs back and forth. He barks, "Bow-wow, bow-wow." Per-

haps he says, "I can, but I won't. It might hurt you."

FATHER'S STORE

Part I

One morning Peter and Polly went to the store. Their mother needed a yeast cake.

"Please give me two cents, mother," said Polly. "I will pay for the yeast cake."

Her mother said, "You may have two cents to put into your bank, Polly. But father will give you the yeast cake." You see, the store belonged to Polly's father.

"May we stay at the store with father?"

"Yes," said her mother. "You may come home to dinner with him. Be sure to look for a train when you get to the track."

The children walked down the hill. They came to the railroad track. Here they stopped to look for a train.

They looked up the track. They looked down the track. But they saw no train. So they went on.

"Perhaps father will let us play keeping store," said Polly.

"Perhaps father will," said Peter.

"I will buy from you first, Peter."

"Then I will buy from you, Polly," said Peter.

Their father was selling sugar. He had a bag on the scales. He was filling the bag.

"Ten pounds," said the man who was waiting.

"That will be sixty cents," said Polly's father. "Sugar costs six cents a pound."

"Father," said Polly, "mother wants a yeast cake. May we play store?"

"Is mother in a hurry for the yeast cake?"

"No, father," said Peter.

"Then you may play store," said his father.

Peter went behind the counter. He was so small that he could not look over. He climbed upon a chair. "What will you buy to-day?" he asked.

"Good morning, Mr. Howe," said Polly. "I will buy that paper of pins."

"What else can I do for you?"

"I will buy those shoes. They will just fit my little girl."

"Those are good shoes," said Peter. "You will like them. They cost fifty dollars."

"Oh, Peter, shoes do not cost so much as that."

"Those shoes do," said Peter. "What else will you buy? I have very good things to sell."

"I will take that cake of soap for mother."

"That is good soap. It costs fifty dollars," said the little storekeeper.

"Oh, Peter," cried Polly, "soap does not cost so much!"

"This soap does," said Peter. "Everything in this store costs fifty dollars."

"Even the pins?" asked his sister.

"Yes, everything."

"That is not a good game, Peter. You do not know how much things really cost. Now let me be storekeeper. I will be Miss Howe. You may buy of me."

FATHER'S STORE

Part II

Polly went behind the counter. "Good morning," said Peter. "Have you many things to sell to-day?"

"Ever so many. What will you buy this morning?"

"First I will take a yeast cake for mother."

"That is two cents, sir. Here it is. Now, Peter, if you keep it in your hand, it will get soft."

"I will put it on the counter," said Peter. "Now I will buy a quart of eggs."

"You cannot buy a quart of eggs, Peter."

"Then I will buy a gallon of eggs."

"That is worse. Don't you know that we sell eggs by the dozen?"

"Then I will not take any eggs. I will take a quart of that candy."

"Oh, Peter," cried Polly, "you cannot buy a quart of candy! But you can buy a pound."

"I do not want a pound, Polly. I want a quart of something. Give me a quart of those stockings."

Polly laughed very hard. Do you know why? Then she said, "If you want a quart, Peter, buy some milk."

"Give me a quart of milk, then. But I do wish I could buy a quart of candy."

Just then their father called to them. "Come, chicks, will you ride home with father? Take the yeast cake, Polly. Now jump in. It is dinner time."

"Father," said Polly, "when I grow up, may I really keep store?"

"If I keep store," said Peter, "I shall sell a quart of everything."

Mr. Howe laughed. "When you go to school, Peter, you will learn better than that."

GRANDMOTHER

Peter and Polly have a grandmother. She is Grandmother Howe. Their father is her son. She calls him her "Big Boy." Peter is her "Little Boy."

Grandmother lives near Peter and Polly. If you will look at the map in the front of this book, you can find the place.

The children love their grandmother very much. She has pretty white hair.

She wears spectacles. She cannot see well without them. Sometimes she calls her spectacles her "eyes."

One day she lost her spectacles. She looked for them upstairs. She looked for them downstairs.

Polly was there. Polly said, "I will find your eyes, grandmother." So she looked and looked. At last she was tired.

She climbed into grandmother's lap. She put up her hands to pat grandmother's pretty white hair. Then she found the spectacles.

Grandmother had pushed them up to the top of her head. Her soft hair hid them.

Polly said, "You funny grandmother, to hide your spectacles there. You had them all the time."

Grandmother said, "I need your eyes to help me find mine."

"I wish I had four eyes," said Polly.

Her grandmother gave her a pair of spectacles. The glass was gone. She said, "You may have them for your very own."

How pleased Polly was! "I think I can see better now that I have four eyes," she told grandmother.

"Can you see to wipe dishes? If you can, you may stay to supper with me."

"Oh, yes, grandmother, I can see to do that."

"Then take this cup and ask your mother for some cream. Be sure to wear your spectacles. You might stub your toe if you did not. Then what would become of grandmother's cream?"

Peter and Wag-wag were playing together. "What is in your cup?" asked Peter.

"Nothing," said Polly. "I came for cream. Grandmother wants a cupful. I am going back to grandmother's for supper."

Peter took the cup. He ran ahead of Polly. "Mother," he shouted, "grandmother wants a couple."

"A couple of what?" asked mother.

"Why, a couple of cream," cried Peter, "a couple of cream!"

"Oh, mother," said Polly, "he means a cupful of cream, not a couple of cream! He doesn't get his words just right, does he, mother?"

IN THE FIELDS

Peter and Polly love to play in the fields. They love to play among the wild flowers.

"I like the buttercups," said Peter. "I like the daisies. I like them all better than tame flowers."

His father said, "Farmers do not like daisies."

"Why don't they?" asked Peter.

"Because they spoil the hay. You cannot make good hay out of daisies."

"When I am a farmer, I shall have a whole field of daisies. Then I shall make just daisy hay," said Peter.

"What will you do with it?" asked father. "Your cows will not like it. Your horses will not like it."

"I will tell them that they must eat it.

I have to eat bread and milk. I do not like that."

"But bread and milk is good for a little boy. It will help him grow.

"Poor hay is not good for cows. You must learn better than that, Peter. You must be a good farmer."

But Peter still likes the daisies. He is not a farmer yet.

In the daisy field is a little brook. It is a good little brook. It always sings softly to itself.

The Story Lady said, "It is telling lovely stories. Sometimes it sings about the water fairies. Their home is in its water.

"If one grows tired of staying at home, she goes on a journey.

"One day a sunbeam says, 'Are you tired of staying in the brook? Come with me and I will take you far away.'

"So the water fairy goes with the sunbeam. Up, up, up, he takes her. She begins to feel lonely. Then she comes to a place where there are many other water fairies.

"They all crowd together. Peter looks up into the sky. He sees them. He calls them a cloud.

"The wind pushes them along. Sometimes they fly fast. Sometimes they fly slowly. It is such fun to sail up there in the sky.

"But they cannot stay always. At last they wish to go home. Down they come through the air.

"Peter thinks they are just raindrops. Watch them hop up and down on the sidewalk and see."

This is what the Story Lady says the little brook sometimes sings about.

"Story Lady," asked Polly, "does our little brook like to run? Does it get tired?"

"I think it likes to run, Polly. It is not hard work for the little brook. It always runs downhill. I will tell you a story about a fairy and the brook. It begins, 'Once upon a time.'"

Now Polly knew something and Peter knew something. It is this. If a story begins, "Once upon a time," it is not a truly true story. The Story Lady had told them so.

HOW NEVER-STILL LET THE BROOKS RUN AWAY

Once upon a time there was a fairy. He was very little, but he had two names. One was Never-still and one Mischief.

The first name was given him when he was born. The Wish Fairy gave it to him. She always gave the new fairies their names.

After she had named a fairy, he had to be just like his name. So, if she called one Never-still, then he could not be still.

But many people spoke of him as Mischief. This was because he was nearly always in mischief. I cannot begin to tell you half the naughty things he did.

Once he sewed up the pockets in the bees' legs. The poor bees could not gather pollen all that day. Then a kind fairy cut the stitches.

Once he stole the lanterns of the fireflies. That night the fireflies could not see their

way about. Some got into the wrong houses. Some did not get home until morning. Then the kind fairies found their lanterns for them.

Once Never-still played a trick on the caterpillars. They have six real legs near their heads. Never-still put these legs on the end near their tails. When the caterpillars walked, they went the wrong way.

At first they thought it very funny. They did not mind at all. But they got into so many wrong places that they grew tired of it. So some kind fairies put their legs back.

Once he spoiled the new house of the wasps. He painted it red. He used the juice of the bloodroot for paint.

The wasps were very angry. They like their paper houses gray. Never-still was punished for this trick. He was shut up in that house for a whole day. Nothing could have been worse.

It took a dozen fairies to undo Never-still's mischief. But they were never cross about it. Every one knew it was his name that made him act so.

There was one thing that Never-still liked best in all the world. He liked it better

than being naughty. This was to see the brooks run by. He could almost be still while he looked at the dancing water.

In those old days the brooks were not as they are now. Only once a year did they run. The rest of the time the fairies kept them locked up in the ponds.

The fairies liked to see the ponds heaped full of water. But once a year the bottoms of the ponds had to be cleaned.

So, on that day the brooks were unlocked. Then they ran down the hillsides.

Now Never-still was the only fairy who liked to see the brooks run. Perhaps this was because of his name.

The other fairies liked best the still ponds. They hated cleaning days. Never-still never helped to clean. He only ran beside the happy brooks and sang and shouted.

One night Never-still danced by a pond. At last he stopped for a drink of dew.

He heard a voice say, "Never-still, Never-still, go and get the keys."

"What keys, and who are you?"

"We are the brooks," said other voices. "You like to see us run. Get the keys that unlock us. We are tired of staying here."

"I never thought of that," said he. "If I unlock you, will you run for me?"

"Oh, yes, Never-still, yes," the voices said. "We will run as long as you like."

Now Never-still knew well where the keys were. He did not stop to think how naughty it would be. He just ran to get them. Then he ran back and unlocked the brooks.

Away they went; and when Never-still saw them, he was very, very happy.

All at once he heard a crowd of fairies

coming. The Fairy Queen was with the rest. He could see that they were angry.

The fairies had never before been angry with him. He was frightened, for he saw that he had been too naughty. Before he thought, he threw the keys into a brook. The brook caught them and hid them.

"Oh, Never-still! What have you done?" cried the fairies. "Now our keys are lost and our brooks are gone forever. We can never lock them up any more."

Then the Fairy Queen said, "Never-still, you must find those keys. You must go and live in the brooks. You must hunt until you find them. Then bring them back, and we will lock up the brooks again."

Now Never-still couldn't be very sad about that. It was just what he longed for. It pleased him to live in the brooks. So he kissed the Queen's hand and jumped into the water.

And there he must be to this day. He has not found the keys; for, when he does, the brooks will be locked up again.

He is very happy. If you listen hard, you can hear him laughing and singing to himself as he floats along.

STRAWBERRY TIME

It is wild strawberry time. Peter and Polly are out picking strawberries. All the children who live near are with them.

Peter has a little tin cup. Polly has a little tin pail.

Once the bottom of Peter's cup was almost covered with strawberries. Then — guess what! He ate them all up.

Now he must begin again to fill his cup. But there are so many things to see. He cannot look for strawberries all the time.

The first strawberry that Polly found did not go into her cup. It did not go into her mouth. She threw it over her right shoulder and said:

"Good luck, good luck,
I hope I'll fill my cup."

Now she is having good luck. Her little pail is half full. Grandmother likes wild

strawberries. Polly will try to get enough for grandmother's supper.

It is hot on the hillside. The other children are in the next field. It is very still.

"What is that, Polly?" whispered Peter.

"What is that, Peter?" whispered Polly.

That is a queer little animal. He is coming out of a hole not so very far away.

Polly and Peter are quite still. Mr. Woodchuck sits down by his hole. He looks at the children.

Perhaps he says to himself, "I am not afraid of you. If you stir, I shall run. You cannot get into my hole. So you cannot get me.

"If you watch here for me, I shall not come back. But I shall not have to stay in my house. I have another door. You don't know where it is."

Polly and Peter do not frighten Mr. Woodchuck. They wish to watch him. All at once he hears Wag-wag bark. Then down he pops into his hole.

Perhaps he thinks, "I like company. I like nice, quiet company like Peter and Polly. But I never did like dogs. So good-by."

At supper father said, "Now tell me about Mr. Woodchuck. How did he look?"

"He had fur," said Polly. "It was brown or gray. I could not see which."

"He had long claws," said Peter.

"He had little ears and bright eyes and a funny mouth," said Polly.

"He sat up on his hind legs," said Peter.

"I saw his tail, when he popped down his hole," said Polly.

"Well done, chicks," said father. "Polly, you don't need four eyes. Keep your two open and see what they will do for you."

"Now let me tell you why your friend Mr. Woodchuck is not liked by every one."

MR. WOODCHUCK

"You thought Mr. Woodchuck was very nice, didn't you? Some people do not think so.

"Mr. Woodchuck does not mean to be bad. But he makes much trouble for the farmers.

"Mr. Woodchuck lives in the ground. He digs his own home. He uses those long claws for digging, Peter.

"He digs most with his fore feet. With his hind feet he throws the dirt backward.

"You can find a pile of dirt near each of his holes. Sometimes his tunnels are many feet long. How hard he must work!

"The tunnels end in a room. This is where Mr. and Mrs. Woodchuck keep the four or five baby woodchucks.

"As soon as the babies are grown up,

they also dig holes. Each one must have a house for winter. Sometimes two live together in the winter, but not often.

"Each house must have two doors. Just think how many holes one family makes.

"No farmer likes his fields full of holes. If he is plowing, his horse may step into one. The horse may break its leg.

"If he is mowing, his machine may run into a pile of dirt left by the woodchuck. This hurts the knives on the machine.

"Then, too, woodchucks must have food to eat. They like clover and beans and peas best.

"They will eat much clover. They will go a long way to find beans and peas. Many times they spoil these crops. Do you wonder that farmers do not like them?

"Now, chicks, it is bedtime. Father will tell you about the woodchucks' long nap. Then you must run.

"In the fall, they eat and eat until they are very fat. When the days begin to grow cold, they begin to grow sleepy.

"By and by they creep into their warm homes. They go to sleep and sleep and sleep.

"They never know about Jack Frost. They never know about the snow above them.

"They sleep all winter. You couldn't do that. But run along now and sleep all night."

"When I am a farmer," said Peter, "I will have a field where woodchucks can dig. I will put all the woodchucks into that field."

"Do you think you can keep them there?" asked father. "Wait and see."

WAG–WAG

Peter's dog is called Wag-wag. This is a funny name for him. He is such a happy dog. He runs and plays all day with the children.

He has a short tail. He tries hard to wag it. He tries so hard that he wags his whole body. That is why he is named Wag-wag.

He likes Peter and Polly. They are always kind to him. They do not hurt him. He would not hurt them. He would not hurt anything.

Late one day, Farmer Brown went into the store. He said to Mr. Howe, "Your dog has been chasing my sheep.

"I saw him doing it this afternoon. He was with another dog. You must have him killed."

"But Wag-wag would not do that," said Mr. Howe. "He is a good dog."

"I saw him," replied Farmer Brown. "Perhaps he got into bad company. I cannot have all my sheep spoiled. He must be killed."

"But it may not have been our dog," said Mr. Howe. "Perhaps he was at home."

He telephoned to Mrs. Howe. "No," said Mrs. Howe, "Wag-wag has not been here since early this morning."

Then Mr. Howe said to Farmer Brown, "Mr. Brown, I will see about this. I do not wish to kill Wag-wag. Perhaps I can keep him tied."

"Do something," replied the farmer. "I will shoot him if I catch him chasing my sheep again."

Peter and Polly were in the store. They had heard Farmer Brown.

"Oh, what shall we do?" cried Polly.

"Oh, what shall we do?" cried Peter.

"First we will go home to supper, chicks. Then we can tell mother. Jump in and we'll drive along."

When they passed grandmother's house, she called to them. "Children, did you

know that Wag-wag is here? He has been here since early this morning. I think he is sick."

"Has he left the house at all?" asked her son.

"Oh, no, he has been in the kitchen all day."

"That settles it," said her Big Boy. "Wag-wag wasn't the dog. Farmer Brown was mistaken. He must look once more."

And he and Peter and Polly were all glad together.

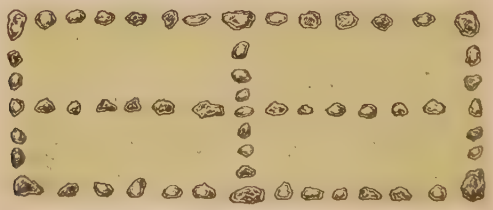
POLLY'S PLAYHOUSE

Polly has a playhouse. Peter helped to build it. But Polly thought of it first. So it is called "Polly's house."

It is quite near the real house. It is in the yard under a large elm tree. On the next tree is the swing.

Polly's house has no roof. It has no really, truly walls. But that does not matter. It is a house just the same. The children built it in one day.

First they cleaned up the yard. Peter took a rake. He raked up the dried grass. Polly took a broom. She swept up the sticks. Then they brought small stones from the road. They laid them in lines like this:



"That is my house," said Polly. "It has four rooms. It has a parlor, a bedroom, a dining room, and a kitchen."

"Where is the front door?" asked Peter. "I wish to ring the bell."

"Oh, I forgot the doors. I will make some now," said Polly. So she made the doors as you see.

Just then mother called to Polly and Peter. "It is supper time, children. Come and wash your faces and hands. We must be ready for father."

At supper Polly said, "I have a new house, father. I will show it to you. It is almost as nice as yours. It has a parlor, a bedroom, a dining room, and a kitchen."

"I must see your house to-morrow," said father. "Did you build it all to-day?"

"Yes, father. But we didn't have anything to put in it. There is no bed. There is no stove and no dishes."

"We must see about those things to-morrow," said mother. "No one can keep house without a bed and a stove and some dishes."

The next morning they all went to look at the new house. You never could guess what had happened.

The walls were out of place. The stones were scattered about.

"Some one bad has been here and spoiled our house," said Peter. "Do you know who it was, father?"

Polly said nothing. She looked very, very sorry. But she did not cry.

"It must have been the hens, or Wag-wag," said Mr. Howe. "They did not mean to be bad. Never mind, chicks. I'll bring some bigger stones. Then your house will last for a long time."

The house was built again. It was better than before. Polly and Peter picked grass on the lawn. This they put into the bed-room. It was for the bed.

In the kitchen they made a stove. It was just a flat stone laid across two other stones.

In the dining room they made a table. This was a smooth white stone. Polly said,

"We must find a white stone for that table." Can you guess why?

Mother gave them some dishes. She gave them two little cups and two little plates.

The children like to play in their house. Nearly every day they find something new for it.

Sometimes mother gives them a plate of bread and butter. The bread is cut into very small pieces. It has maple sugar on it.

Then they play housekeeping. Mother said, "One must have food really to keep house. I should not like to try to keep house without something to eat."

What do you think your mother would say about it?

ON THE BRIDGE

Can you find the bridge on your map? The river is far below it. Steep banks lead down to the water.

Peter and Polly do not often climb down there. Mother and father do not like to have them.

But they watch the river from the bridge. The water looks brown. That is because the bottom is covered with brown stones.

Sometimes the Story Lady watches the water with them. She taught them to say this verse:

Dark brown is the river,
Golden is the sand,
It flows along forever,
With trees on either hand.

Polly said, "Perhaps the man who made that knew about our little river.. It sounds just like it."

Sometimes the big boys fish from the

bridge. Polly and Peter cannot. It takes such a long line to reach the water. But they often watch the big boys.

The children like to look for things in the water. Lean over the rail with them, and see what you can find.

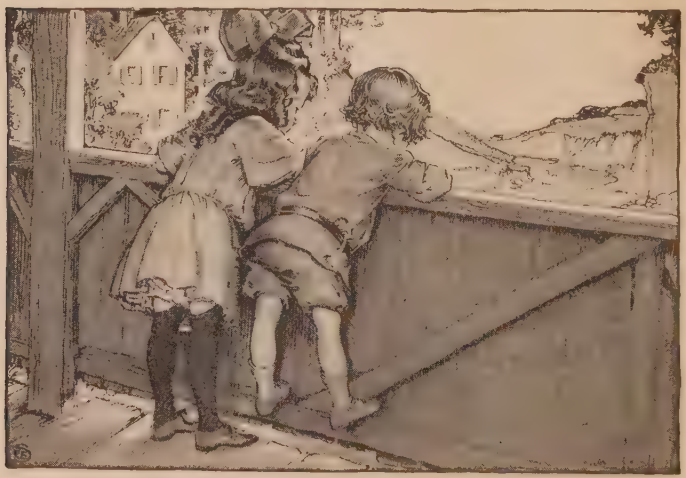
In the spring the river is high. The melting snows fill it. The spring rains fill it. It picks up logs and branches and boxes. It carries these along.

When the water grows lower, these catch on the rocks.

Then, too, thoughtless people throw things from the bridge into the river. The Story Lady says this is a pity.

But Peter and Polly do not think this spoils the river. They like to see how many different things they can find deep down in the water.

Once there was a cart wheel, once a part of a wagon. Sometimes they can see broken dishes and bottles.



"I wish we had those dishes to put in our playhouse," said Polly.

"I wish I knew what is in those bottles," said Peter.

One day Polly counted three tin pails and five tin cans. The sunbeams touched the tin. This made it shine.

Peter was sure that there must be silver

at the bottom of the river. Perhaps it belonged to the water fairies.

That night he said to his father, "Will you help me get the silver at the bottom of the river?"

"I'm afraid there isn't any, Peter. But sometimes people find pearls in the river. A fine pearl is as good as silver. It can be sold.

"When you are a big boy, you may hunt for pearls. But first I must teach you to swim. Then mother will not worry about you."

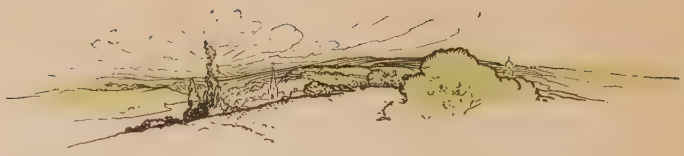
"Did you ever find a pearl, father?"

"Oh, yes, Polly. When I was a boy, I hunted for pearls every summer. The pearls in this river are found in clams.

"We boys used to dig many clams. Once in a while we found a clam with a pearl in it. Most of these were not very good. But I found one good pearl. Mother has it. She will show it to you."

"I shall always fish for clams now," said Peter. "What shall I use for bait?"

"You will not catch any clams," said father. "So you might just as well fish for fish."



DOWN THE ROAD

There is a road which runs past the store. Follow it for five miles. It will take you to a village.

Peter and Polly call it the "Large Village." That is easier than its real name.

They call their home the "East Village."

It is a very little village. It has just fourteen houses. Most of these are on one street. This street is the road which runs beside the river.

Just halfway between East Village and Large Village lives Farmer Brown. Here is a picture of his farmhouse.

His barns are much larger than his house. Can you think why?

One noon father said, "Peter and Polly, will you drive with me to-day? I am going to Large Village.

"You may come as far as Farmer Brown's. He wishes to see you. He wishes to see Wag-wag, too. He will show you his sheep."

It was fun to go with father. First Polly was the driver. Then Peter was the driver. Father always said, "Ladies before gentlemen."

Mary is the bay horse. She knows when the children are driving. Then she goes carefully.

Peter and Polly often feed her sugar. Mary likes sugar. She likes Peter and Polly, too. She does not mind if they drive her for just a little while.

By and by they caught up with a big boy. He had bare feet. His hair was wet. He lived with Farmer Brown. The children knew him well.

"Hello, John," said Mr. Howe. "Jump

in and we will give you a ride home. You have been to the swimming hole, haven't you?"

"Yes, I have. But how did you know?"

"I knew because your hair is so wet. Have you had any dinner?"

"No, and I am glad to get a ride home. I am very hungry. Guess what I have in my hand, Polly."

"A frog," said Polly; "but I am not afraid of frogs."

"A worm," said Peter; "but I am not afraid of worms."

"Wrong, Polly. Wrong, Peter. It's an egg — not a bird's egg, either. It's a turtle's egg. I found it in the sand by the river. I left the rest there."

"Were they in a nest? Oh, take us to see them," cried both children.

"Turtles don't build nests like birds," said John. "I will take you to see the eggs to-morrow, if your father will let me."

"You may take them, John. But you must keep them out of the water," said Mr. Howe. "They are not big enough to go in swimming."

"All right, sir," said John, "they shall not even go in wading."

SALTING THE SHEEP

Soon they reached Farmer Brown's. Peter and Polly and John jumped out of the wagon.

"Thank you for the ride, Mr. Howe," said John.

"Good-by, father," said Peter and Polly. "Don't forget us when you go home."

Farmer Brown came out of the house. "Well, this is nice," he said. "We will play together until your father comes back. What shall we do first?"

"See the sheep, please," said Polly.

Farmer Brown took a bag of coarse salt. Then away they went. Polly and Peter knew why he took the salt. Do you know?

Sheep like salt more than you like sugar. It is good for them, too.

The sheep were in a pasture on a hill. From the house one can see the pasture.

Farmer Brown gave a strange call. When

the sheep heard this, they came to him. Perhaps they thought that he had salt for them.

Soon they had come from all parts of the pasture. They crowded about Farmer Brown. He spread salt on the ground in many places.

The children watched the sheep lick it up. Wag-wag watched them, too. He sat very still. He did not run nor bark.

There were big sheep and little lambs. Some had long tails. Some had short tails.

"Those must be Bo-Peep's sheep," said Polly. "They've left their tails behind them."

"Maybe they are," replied Farmer Brown. "I guess I don't know about Bo-Peep."

Some of the sheep had black faces. And there were two black sheep in the flock.

Polly put her hand into the wool of one sheep. It felt soft and warm. Next to the skin it was very white. It was dirty on the outside.

The wool was not very long. It had been cut off in the spring. But it was growing every day.

"How often do they have their hair cut?" asked Peter. "I have mine cut very often."

"Just once a year," Farmer Brown told him. Then he said, "Wag-wag is a good dog. He does not frighten the sheep. I am glad he was not the dog that chased them."

"Why does that hurt the sheep so much?" asked Polly.

"Let's sit down here under this tree," said Farmer Brown. "You look at the sheep, and I will tell you about them."

THE FLOCK OF SHEEP

"Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?"

"Yes, sir, yes, sir; three bags full.
One for my master, one for his dame,
And one for the little boy who lives in the lane."

"Now," said Farmer Brown, "it is just this way. We farmers keep sheep to get wool. Or we keep them to sell for food.

"Sometimes bad dogs kill our sheep. From these we cannot get wool or food. Sometimes bad dogs chase our sheep, but do not kill them.

"Suppose you were a sheep, and a bad dog chased you. How should you feel, Polly?"

"I should feel frightened," said Polly.

"Yes, and shouldn't you be frightened all the time? You would wonder when that dog was coming again. Every time you heard a noise you would stop eating.

"You would look around for that bad

dog. Even if you couldn't see him, you would think he was surely near.

"After a while, you would be so afraid that any noise would make you run. Do you think that you could grow fat, if you felt like that? Do you think that your wool would grow nice and thick?"

"No," said Polly. "I am sorry that dogs chase sheep. And I am glad that Wag-wag did not do it."

"So am I," said Farmer Brown. "In the summer the sheep live in the pasture. They eat the grass. Their wool grows and grows. How do you keep warm out of doors in winter?"

"We put on thick coats," said Polly.

"The sheep do the same thing. Their wool has grown so thick during the summer that they have warm coats, too.

"These sheep that you see cannot stay in the snowy fields in winter. What could they find to eat there? The grass is dry and it is covered with snow. What could they find to drink? The water in the brook freezes over.

"Then I keep my sheep in a part of my barn. In the daytime they go into the

barnyard. Some farmers keep sheep in sheds made for them.

"We must give them hay to eat and water to drink. If they fall sick, we must care for them.

"In places where there is not much snow, sheep can stay in the fields all winter. But our sheep cannot. So it is hard work caring for them.

"In the early spring the sheep are sheared. That means we cut off their

wool. They do not need it any longer to keep them warm. Summer is coming again.

"The wool that comes off a sheep we call a fleece. We sell wool by the pound. So we like the fleeces to be thick and heavy.

"Men buy the wool from the farmers. They send it to the mills. There it is made into woolen cloth.

"The sheep are good friends of yours, Peter."

"How do you know?" asked Peter. "I never played with them before."

"Because they gave you the warm mittens and stockings that you wore last winter."

"Those were black," said Peter. "Were they made from the black sheep?"

"Maybe they were," said Farmer Brown. "But don't you know that white can be turned into any color?"

"Is it magic?" asked Peter.

"There is no magic about it. Was it magic to paint my house white and my barns red? Ask your mother. She will tell you."

THE PINK ICE CREAM PARTY

Mr. Brown took Peter and Polly back to the farm. On the way down the hill they saw a snake.

"That is a good snake," said Farmer Brown. "His name is garter snake. He will not hurt any one. We must never try to kill him."

"See how fast he can go along," said Polly. "But he has no legs. He does not go straight. He makes curves like our little brook."

At the farm Mr. Brown gave a call. Two lambs came running around the house. They came close to Mr. Brown and said, "Baa, baa."

"These are our pets," said Mr. Brown. "Their mothers died when they were little babies. I brought them into the house.

"Mrs. Brown fed them with a bottle. She fed them on warm milk. She took care of them. So they like her very much.

"They will follow her everywhere. They will go up on the piazza. If the door is open, they will walk into the house.

"At first it was funny. But now they are quite big. They make us much trouble. I must put them in the pasture with the flock."

Just then Mrs. Brown came out. "Polly and Peter," she said, "I have some pink ice cream for you."

"Oh, goody, goody!" cried Polly.

"Oh, goody, goody!" cried Peter.

"We will have our party out here on the steps. The lambs may come to the party. Here are some animal crackers, too."

She gave each child a dish full of pink ice cream.

Polly took an animal cracker. It was a dog. It tasted very good. Peter found a lion. That tasted very good.

Then Polly found a sheep. She said, "I shall not eat this. I do not like mutton."

"It will taste just like the others," said Mrs. Brown. "It will not taste like mutton."

Now, of course, Polly knew this. She was only playing.

By and by Mr. Howe drove up. "Almost supper time," he called. "Jump in, chicks."

"Thank you, Mrs. Brown. Thank you, Mr. Brown," said Polly and Peter. "We have had a good time."

"And so have we," said the farmer and his wife. "You must come to play with us again soon. You are better pets than the lambs."

"I won't let John forget to take you to see the turtle's eggs," said Mrs. Brown.

ON HORSEBACK

The very next day John came. Peter and Polly were out in the road watching for him. He was not walking. He was riding horseback. He had Farmer Brown's old bay mare.

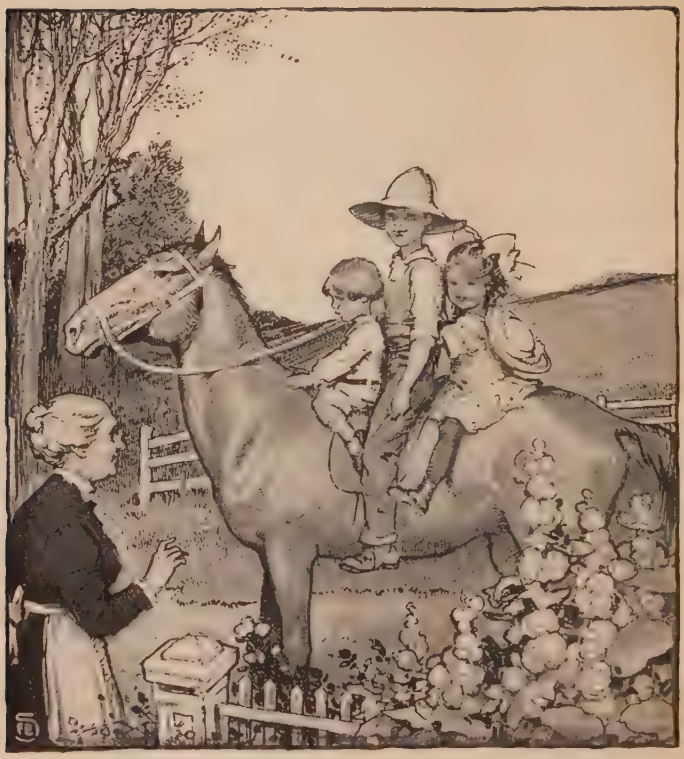
"Hello, Polly! Hello, Peter!" called John. "I'm going to see the turtle's eggs. Are you going with me? If you are, jump on."

"Oh, John," said Polly, "may we ride on your horse, too?"

"You surely may. I asked your father when I came past the store. I'll ride up close to the fence. You climb up the fence, and get on.

"Polly, you sit behind and hold fast to me. Peter, sit here in front of me. I will hold fast to you. Now we are off."

And they were. Mother came out and called, "Good-by." She knew that the children were safe with John.



They stopped at grandmother's house. She must see them riding horseback.

In the bridge some children were playing. Peter and Polly called to them. They wished everybody to look at them.

"Don't you wish you could ride horseback?" said Polly. All the children stopped playing to watch them out of sight.

John let his horse drink at the watering trough. Polly said, "How much she drinks, John! I can feel her sides all swell up."

At the store, Mr. Howe came out. "Well, John Gilpin," he said, "are you off?" He gave John some bananas. "I have heard that hunters are always hungry."

"Are we hunters, father?" asked Peter.

"Oh, yes, Peter. You are egg hunters to-day. Hold on to John Gilpin, Polly. And, John, look out for your horse, won't you?"

"I will be careful," said the big boy. "I won't play John Gilpin this time. You may trust me, Mr. Howe. We will walk the horse all the way."

And off they went down the road. Soon they came to a path. This path led to the river.

"We will leave the horse here," said John. So he tied the mare to the fence. The sun was very hot. John was careful to tie her where the trees would give her shade.

She could nibble a little grass that was near her. She would be quite happy until the children came back.

JOHN GILPIN

"John," said Polly, "is your name Gilpin? I thought it was Brown."

"So it is, Polly. And Farmer Brown is my uncle. That is why I live with him every summer.

"In the winter I go back to the city. I have to be in school then. I wish I could stay here all winter."

"It is nice," said Polly. "The snow is deep. We have a school, too. But why did father call you 'John Gilpin'? Doesn't he know your name?"

"Oh, yes, he knows it. But that is a joke on me. When I first rode horseback, I did not know much about horses.

"One day my horse wished to go home. She thought that it was time. I did not think so. But she turned around and went just the same. I could not stop her.

"John Gilpin could not stop his horse, either. He is a man in a poem. He lived in London. That is a big city across the

ocean. I will tell you the story. You will think it is funny.

"One day his wife and he planned to take their children to the country. They wished to have a dinner away from home.

"Their carriage was so full that John Gilpin had to ride on horseback. He asked a friend for a horse.

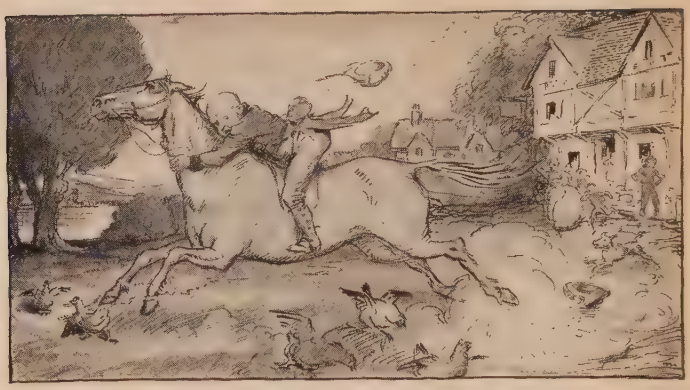
"He was late in getting started. He kept a store and had to wait on some customers. His wife and children went along without him.

"When at last he did get started, his horse began to go very fast. He could not stop her any more than I could stop my horse.

"He did not ride his horse very well. He bumped up and down on her back. He lost his hat. He lost his wig. He must have looked funny.

"His horse went right past the house where his family was waiting for him. They saw him riding by.

"'Stop, stop, John Gilpin! Here's the house' —
They all at once did cry,
'The dinner waits, and we are tired;'
Said Gilpin — 'So am I.'



"But he could not stop his horse. She galloped on until she came to her master's home.

"Her master ran out to see what was the matter. He wiped the dirt from Gilpin's face.

"He gave John another hat and wig. He asked John to stay to dinner. But John said he must ride back. He must have dinner with his wife and children.

"So turning to his horse he said,

'I am in haste to dine,
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine.'

"Just then a noise frightened that horse. Off she started as before. Only this time she galloped toward London.

"Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig;
He lost them sooner than at first,
For why? They were too big.

"His wife saw him gallop past again. She thought that he was crazy. She asked a boy to ride after him. Some men saw the boy chasing John Gilpin.

"They thought that Gilpin was a thief running away. So they all chased him, too.

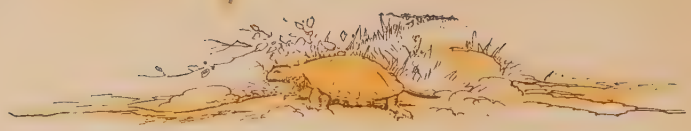
"The people up and down the road watched the chase. They thought that Gilpin was riding a race with these men.

"And so he did and won it, too,
For he got first to town,
Nor stopped, till where he had got up,
He did again get down."

"That is a good story," said Polly. "He didn't get any dinner, did he? Did you lose your wig, John?"

"No, mine is sewed on too tight," said John. "Maybe I didn't look quite so funny as Gilpin. But your father thinks that I looked funny enough.

"He always remembers it, and that is why he calls me 'John Gilpin.'"



THE TURTLE'S EGGS

"Now, Polly and Peter," said John, "let us eat our bananas. Aren't you hungry? The sun is very hot. See how it shines on the water.

"Here you are very near the turtle's eggs. Can you see them? I shall not tell you where they are.

"You must hunt for them. We will play 'hot' or 'cold.' When you come near the eggs, I'll call 'hot.' You are hot now.

"Oh, Polly! You are getting colder and colder. That means you are going away from the eggs.

"Now you are getting warm; now very warm; now hot. You'll burn your hand in a minute. Yes, there they are under the sand. You saw the end of that one sticking out, didn't you?"

"What a lot of them, John," said Polly. "How did they get there?"

"Why, the turtle scraped a hollow in the sand. Then she laid them there."

"But who covered them up?"

"The turtle did. She cannot sit upon them like a hen. She has a hard shell, you know. So she covers them with sand and lets the warm sun do the rest."

"What will come out of those eggs?" asked Peter. "Will they hatch little birds?"

"No, indeed. They will hatch turtles — little bits of fellows. Do you think that those look like bird's eggs, Peter?"

"They are not the same shape," said Polly. "They are alike at both ends.

Hen's eggs are not. Bird's eggs are not."

"Good for you, Polly. You have two bright eyes. Now drop the egg which you have in your hand."

"I don't like to drop it, John. Won't it break?"

"Try it and see. There! It did not break. It just hopped up a little way. A rubber ball will do that, but a hen's egg will not. Of course, if you dropped a turtle's egg too hard, it would break, just as a hen's egg would."

"Will the mother come to see her baby turtles when they hatch? Will she take care of them?"

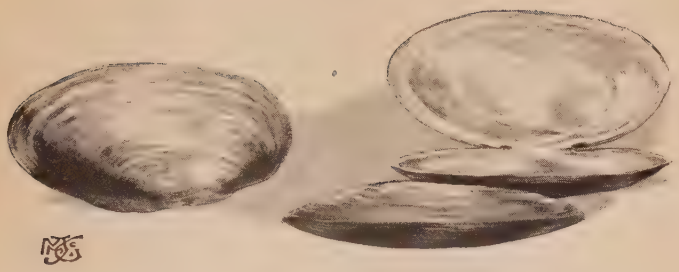
"I think not," said John. "Her babies will have to take care of themselves."

"She isn't so good as a hen mother," said Polly. "I'd rather be a little chicken than a little turtle. Then I'd have a mother."

"So should I," said John. "A mother is a very good thing to have. Well, Peter, what have you found?"

"A shell," said Peter.

"So it is. It's a clamshell. Here is another shell to go with it. Fit them together like this, Peter.



"See! They make a box. The upper half is the lid. Once a clam lived in this shell house. His shells were fastened together at the back.

"He could open and shut them in front as he wished. But he could not come out of his house. It was fastened to him."

"And a turtle's house is fastened to him, too," said Polly.

"Where do clams live?" asked Peter.

"This kind lives at the bottom of the river in the sand."

"My father has found pearls in clams. He has found them in this very river," said Polly.

"Let's take the clamshells home, Peter. We will put them in our playhouse. We will play that they are bathtubs."

PETER'S PLAYMATE

Peter has a playmate. His name is Timothy. But that name is too big for him. So he is called Tim.

Tim lives on a farm. His father keeps many cows. They are all Jersey cows.

Every morning these cows are milked. Then in summer they are driven to the pasture. Every evening they are driven back to the barn and milked again.

All the milk is put into large tin cans. Once a day it is taken to the station. It is put on an early train.

It is carried many miles to a great city. There it is sold to people who do not keep cows.

Tim likes these pretty Jersey cows. He likes to look at them as they stand in the barn. He likes to see them come from the pasture. He wishes he had one for his own.

His father said to him, "You are a little boy now, Tim. What would you do with a cow?

You could not even milk her. Wait until you grow up. When you are big and can help me, I will give you some cows. But now you must play with your dog."

So Tim has changed his dog Collie into a cow. He tries to drive him up and down the road.

"Hi, there, Jersey-cow!" he shouts to him.

Collie does not act much like a cow. He barks and wags his tail. Did you ever hear a real cow bark? Did you ever see a real cow wag her tail?

Tim's Jersey-cow and Wag-wag are playmates. They play together when Tim and Peter play together.

They run up and down the road. They roll over and over. They bark, "Bow-wow, bow-wow." But they are never cross.

Peter throws sticks for them to chase. They like to do this. They find the sticks and take them back to Peter.

One day Tim tried to throw sticks, too. He could not make them go straight. He had not learned how to throw.

He hit Jersey-cow with one. He hit Wag-wag with one. They jumped up and down and thought it was great fun.

So Tim threw again. This time the stick went up into the air. It came down on Tim's own head. Tim did not like this very well. It made him cross.

So he picked up the stick once more. He thought, "I will throw it hard. Then it will go far away. I shall never see it again."

He threw it with all his might. He threw it so hard that he sat right down in the road. He did not like that very well.

But that was not all. The stick which he threw hit Peter. It hurt Peter, too. It made him very cross.

"Why did you do that, Tim?" asked Peter, crossly.

"I don't know," said Tim. "I was throwing."

"You can't throw in my road any more," said Peter. "You can't throw straight. You must go home."

"I don't want to go home, Peter. Old stick knocked me down, too. Let's fight old stick."

"You go home, Tim. I will call Wag-wag if you don't. He will bark at you."

So he whistled to Wag-wag. But Wag-wag was busy playing with Jersey-cow. He would not stop. He did not know that Tim and Peter were cross.

Then Peter started to go into the house. Tim called to him.

He said, "Peter, I will go home. But you come, too. We will take my goat. You may drive him."

"All right, Tim," said Peter. "Come on. I am not cross. I don't care if you did hit me. You are such a little boy it did not hurt much. I will show you how to throw straight."

Now Peter and Tim always liked to make up. So off they went to Tim's house very, very happy.

MR. BILLY GOAT

Tim's house is up the hill past Peter's house. Tim and Peter went up the hill. Jersey-cow and Wag-wag ran after them.

"Some one must harness old Billy Goat, Tim," said Peter. "Then we can drive him."

"One of the men will do it, Peter. My father will let him."

The boys went into the barn. One of the men who worked on the farm was there. He was cleaning a harness.

"Hello, boys, do you want a job to-day?" he called. "I will let you clean this harness. Or you may water the horses. Or you may sweep the barn floor. Do you want to help?"

"No," said Peter. "We want you to help us. Please harness Billy Goat so that we can drive him."

"Harness Billy Goat?" said the man. "Billy Goat is cross to-day."

"So were we cross, but we got over it.

Maybe Billy will get over it, too. What made Billy cross?"

"I guess it was stomach ache," said the man. "Last night he found some of Tim's stockings hanging on the line. He thought that they looked good to eat. So he chewed off all the feet. He left the legs."

"Then I shall have to go barefoot," said Tim. "That will be fun."

"Well, I guess he didn't eat all your stockings up, Tim. I saw your mother mending holes for you this morning."

Just then Billy walked into the barn. The man caught him. He put on Billy's harness. Then he hitched him to the cart.

"Who goes first?" asked the man.

"I do," said Peter, getting into the cart.

Billy was cross. Perhaps his stomach did ache. He did not wish to be driven.

He stood still on the barn floor. He would not move.

The man laughed. "Don't let him run away, will you, Peter?" he said.

But Peter did not think it was funny. He wished for a ride. So the man took hold of Billy. He pulled Billy out of the barn.

This made Billy still more cross. He put down his head. He ran at the man. He tried to butt him.

Peter pulled on the reins. He called, "Whoa, Billy, whoa." But Billy would not stop. He chased the man back into the barn.

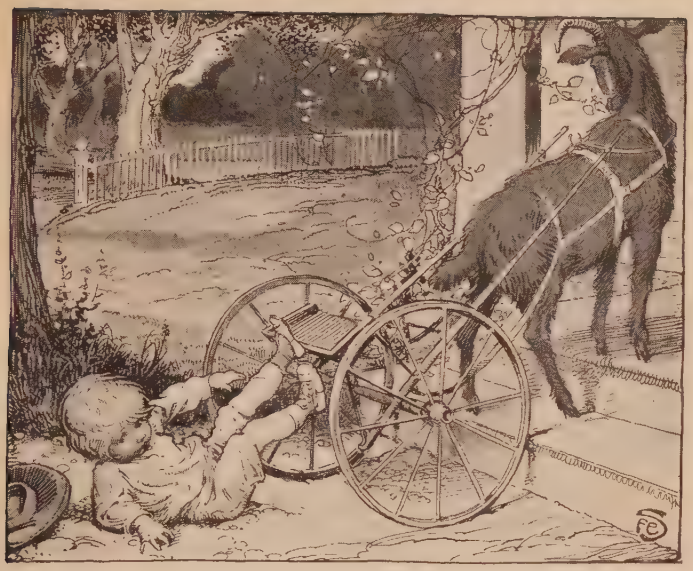
Then he felt better. He trotted up and down the road a few times. Peter liked it very much.

At last it was Tim's turn. He thought he would drive Billy down to Peter's house.

But Billy had become cross again. He would not go. He stood still a long, long time.

Peter and Tim grew tired of waiting. At last Billy started. He walked away from the road.

He walked on the grass. He began to eat it. He went close up to the house. He

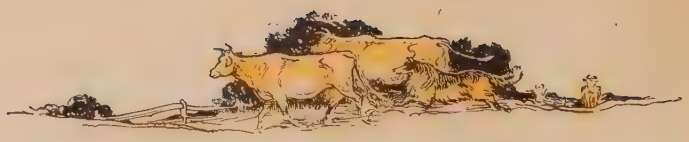


ate a few morning-glory vines. This was naughty.

Then he stopped and looked around. He was thinking what to do next. He saw the piazza. He started up the steps. Tim fell out of the cart. He bumped his head. But it did not hurt him much.

He jumped up, and he and Peter pushed naughty Billy off the piazza. Billy ran to the barn.

Just then the cows began to come from the pasture. So the boys ran to the barn, too. They liked to watch the men milk.



THE JERSEY COWS

The Jersey cows came into the barnyard. They were pretty cows. Tim's dog Collie was driving them.

Collie knows just how to drive cows. He can keep them together. He can make them go fast. He can make them go slowly.

He can keep them all on one side of the road. He can turn them when he wishes. He can pick out one cow and leave her in the pasture.

He can do these things more quickly than a boy or a man. He is worth a great deal to his master.

The Jersey cows walked into the cow stable. This has many open windows. These keep the air fresh. The stable itself is kept very clean.

The cows are kept very clean. The men who milk are very clean, too. Before they begin, they put on clean overalls and coats and fresh white caps.

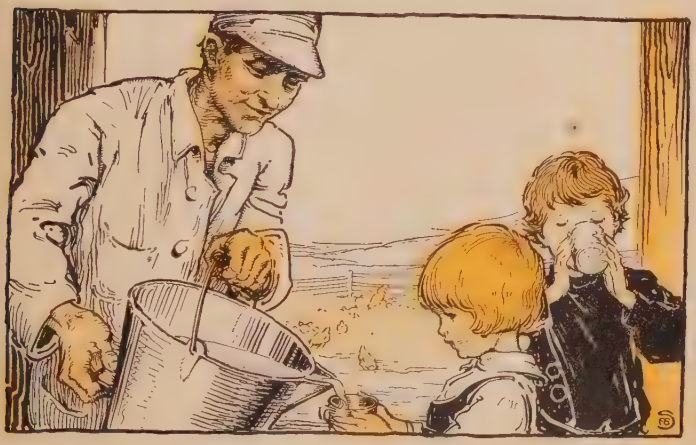
They wash their hands. Everything

must be clean. Then the milk will have no dirt in it. It can be sold for more money than dirty milk.

Peter and Tim like to watch the men milk. They like to see the foam on the tops of the pails.

One of the men said to Tim, "Run into the house and get your tin cups. I will give you some milk to drink."

Tim brought two bright cups. The man filled them both. The boys liked the warm milk very much.



After the milking was over, they saw the men feed the calves. Some of these were so young that they could not eat grass. They must be fed on milk.

At first they did not know how to drink this from a pail. Then there was great fun watching them learn.

The men pushed the calves' noses down into the milk. By and by they began to drink. Sometimes one blew the milk in the pail all over the man who was feeding her.

Then Peter and Tim looked at the cows. They knew many of them by name. They went down the long rows speaking to them.

They watched them chewing their cuds. They watched them swallow the cuds. After

a cud had been swallowed, another came up into the cow's mouth. They watched the cows' throats to see this.

Sometimes they touched the cool, wet noses of the cows. The boys were not afraid of them. Cows do not bite. They have no upper front teeth.

They pull the grass partly with their lips. Their back teeth are so flat that they can chew their cuds nicely.

"This cow is the best of all," said Tim. "My father will not sell her. We keep all her milk. My father says it will make me a big boy."

"My cow is black and white," said Peter. "She is not a Jersey cow. Once my father put me on her back. She did not like it. I am not afraid of her. She cannot hook me. She has no horns."

"When I am a big man, I shall have more cows than these," said Tim.

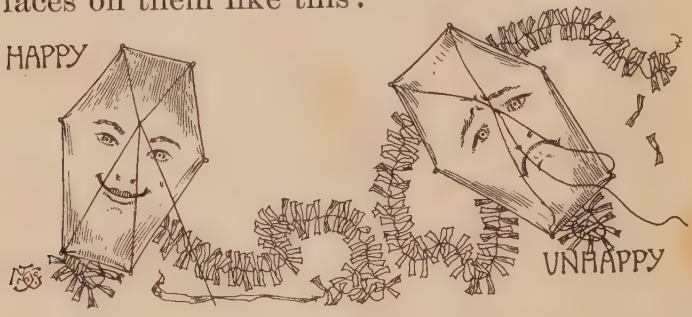
"Then I will sell you my daisy hay for them," said Peter.

"What is daisy hay, Peter? Is it good for cows?"

"My father says it is not, Tim. Now I'm going home to supper."

FLYING KITES

One evening Peter and Polly had such fun. They were flying kites. Their father helped them make two kites. He drew faces on them like this:



The children made the tails. These were of colored paper. They called the kites "Happy" and "Unhappy." Perhaps you can guess why.

Peter and Polly are too little to fly kites alone. They have often tried to do so. But the kites will not go up into the air. Their father must help them.

So after supper Peter, Polly, and father set off. They took Happy and Unhappy with them.

They went to a place in the road where there were no trees. The ground was smooth and good for running. It was a windy evening — just the kind for flying kites.

Father gave Happy to Polly. Then he unwound a little of the string. Polly tossed Happy into the air as high as she could.

Just then father ran with the string. This sent Happy still higher. The wind caught him and away he sailed.

Peter held the string while father and Polly put Unhappy up into the air, too. At last both kites were high above their heads.

Peter jumped up and down and clapped his hands. "Oh, see them, see them!" he cried. "I wish I were riding on one of them."

"See them chase each other," said Polly. "See them dip down and then fly up again. They look like great white birds."

"But look at their long tails," said Peter. "Birds don't have such long tails."

"How they pull on the strings, father. They are trying to get away."

"That is the wind, Polly. Don't you feel

it? It is blowing your hair all about. The kites are so light that it carries them along with it. You are too heavy for this wind to carry you up into the air.

"Hear it whistle. How loud it sounds! You can hear it, and you can feel it. But can you see it?"

"No," said Polly. "But I can see the things it does. I know about the wind, father. The Story Lady taught me a poem about it. I will say it to you on the way home."

"Do," said father. "Look at those birds up in the air. They are swallows. Perhaps they live in some chimney. See the wind blow them.

"They spread their wings and let it carry them along. What fun it must be! When they wish to fly back against the wind, it is not so easy. But they can do it.

"Now watch our kites. They cannot fly against the wind."

"I wish I were a bird," said Peter. "I would fly higher than our kites. I would fly up to the moon. Do swallows go to the moon?"

"No, Peter, it is too far away. They don't go to the sun, either. That is still farther.

"Now, chicks, see the lovely sunset. That is the way the sun says good night to you. It is time to go home.

"Shall I let Happy sail right up to those pretty pink clouds? He will never come back."

"Oh, father, if you do, Unhappy will look crosser than ever. Let's keep them both."

So father pulled in the kites. But when Unhappy was coming down, he caught on some wires.

There he hung until the next morning. Then father took him off with a very long fishing pole.

THE WIND

On the way home father said, "Now, Polly, what about the wind?"

Then Polly said these verses:

"I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long!
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

"I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long!
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

"O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long!
O wind, that sings so loud a song!"

"Those are good verses," said father. "But they don't tell you what the wind is. Do you know?"

"I used to think it was a great giant blowing with his mouth," said Polly. "I used to think he blew off my hat just to tease me. Now I think it can't be a giant. Is it, father?"

"No, it isn't a real giant, Polly. It is just moving air. Sometimes it moves slowly. Then we say it is a breeze. Sometimes it moves fast. Then it is a strong wind.

"A very strong wind goes many miles an hour. It is as strong as your giant. It can do much harm.

"Sometimes it blows down grass and grain so that they are hard to cut. Sometimes it blows down trees.

"Sometimes it is so strong that it blows the roofs from the houses. It even takes up a whole house and carries it away."

"What do the people in the house do?" asked Polly.

"They are often badly hurt," said father. "Should you like to live where your house might blow away?"

"No, I should not, father. Why don't those people tie their houses down?"

"Many people who live in that part of our country dig large holes in the ground. When they see a hard storm coming, they go into these holes. There they wait for the storm to pass.

"It is better to hide in the holes than to be blown away by the wind."

"Then, when they come out of their holes, sometimes their houses are gone," said Polly. "I should not like that."

"The wind is never so strong here," said father. "We like it in the summer. It flies our kites. It helps to dry our hay. It makes the air seem fresh and cool.

"We like it in the winter, too, even when it blows the snow into drifts."

"I shall be glad when winter comes," said Peter. "Then I can play in the drifts."

"Poor boy," said father, "what a long time you must wait. Summer isn't half over yet. Now you two run along to bed. Perhaps you will dream of flying up to the moon."

NOTE. The poem on page 86 is from R. L. Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses*, by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

PETER'S DREAM

Part I

Peter went to bed. It was not dark. The bright moon shone in at the window. Peter could see everything in his room.

All at once he heard a noise. It was a tap, tap on the window. Peter opened his eyes. He saw that the room had grown quite dark. Something was outside the window. It was hiding the moon.

Tap, tap came the noise again. "What is it?" called Peter.

"It is I, Peter. Come to the window."

Peter climbed out of bed and went to the window. There he saw a bird. Not such a bird as you have ever seen. Oh, no!

This bird was so large that his head filled the whole window. His eyes were the size of saucers. His bill was more than a foot long.

"Hello, Peter," said the Bird.

"Hello," said Peter. "Who are you?"

"I am a Bird, Peter. I have come to take you to the moon. Your father said that birds cannot fly to the moon. He forgot all about fairy birds. I am a Fairy Bird.

"You made a wish this evening. You wished that you could fly up to the moon. The Wish Fairy heard about it. She sent me to take you there."

"Why did she?" asked Peter. "Shall I always have my wishes?"

"If the Wish Fairy hears them, you will. But she will not hear them unless the wind carries them to her. And the wind will not carry them unless it pleases him. But come along. We can talk as we fly."

"Where shall I sit?" asked Peter.

"Sit on my back. There is a warm place behind my neck. Climb up on the window sill. Now, jump! There you are, safe. Here we go."

And Peter felt the Bird's great wings flapping. He felt himself moving. He saw that he was flying up above his house, above his trees; and he knew that he was on his way to the moon.

He leaned over and looked below him. At first he could see the houses and their

lights. He could see the river shining in the moonlight. He looked above him. Stars and clouds were everywhere.

"How do you like it?" asked the Bird.

"I like it," said Peter. "Where have the houses gone?"

"They are still there, Peter. We are so far away now that you cannot see them."

"Why does the wind blow so hard? Is he carrying wishes to the Wish Fairy?"

"Oh, no! The wind is still. But I am

flying very fast. You are moving, instead of the air. If I stop, you will see there is no wind."

"What is that music, Bird?"

"That is the moonbeams singing. Listen and you can hear the words."

The moonbeams were on their way to the earth. They were singing this song over and over again:

"Moonbeams we, gay and free.
All the night we make bright,
As we fly through the sky.
Moonbeams we, gay and free."

"They always sing like that," said the Bird. "They sing because they are happy. They like to go to the earth. They like to make it light."

"I never heard them when I was at home," said Peter.

"You never can hear them unless you are with a fairy. You hear them to-night because you are on the back of a Fairy Bird.

"You must shut your eyes now for five minutes. When you open them, we shall be in the moon."

PETER'S DREAM

Part II

When Peter opened his eyes, he looked about him. Then he winked and blinked. Such a place he had never seen before!

The roads were made of brown sugar. The trees were chocolate. Their leaves were green candy. Their flowers and fruit were green and red gumdrops.

The houses were made of blocks of candy. Some were red, some were white, and some were yellow. Peter thought it would be fun to live in a candy house.

The fences were made of candy. Peter saw two boys break off a piece of fence and eat it. But, when he looked again, the fence was as good as ever.

All at once he heard music. Many people were coming up the street. He had never before seen any of them. But he had seen their pictures. So he was sure that he knew them.

First came a queen. She was carrying a plate of tarts. Peter knew she must be the Queen of Hearts.

She stopped and said, "How do you do, Peter?"

Peter tried to be very polite and said, "How do you do, Queen?"

"It is a nice evening, Peter," went on the Queen. "But don't you know that you must take off your cap when you speak to a queen?"

"Please excuse me," said Peter. "I didn't think I had any cap with me."

"You haven't," said the Queen. "But you must take it off just the same."

Then she walked on.

"I'm sure I don't know what that means," thought Peter. "I don't see how I can."

Just then, along came a boy. Under his arm he carried a hen. He stopped by Peter and said to the hen, "Lay." The hen laid an egg of gold.

Then Peter knew that this was Jack, the boy who climbed the beanstalk.

"You may have the egg, Peter," said Jack. "For if you have it now, you won't have it then."

"Thank you," said Peter, as the boy

walked on. "But I'm sure I don't know what that means."

After this Peter saw Cinderella, Puss-in-Boots, Mother Goose, and many others. They all spoke to him kindly. Cinderella

let him try on her glass slipper. It fitted very well.

She said, "It may fit here, Peter, but it won't fit there."

And Peter said again, "Thank you, but I'm sure I don't know what that means."

At last there were only two children left.

One was a little girl with a red hood and cloak. The other was a boy. He wore blue clothes. He carried a horn.

"Hello, Peter," said Boy Blue. "How do you like the moon?"

"I like it," said Peter. "But what are you all doing here?"

"We live here," said Little Red Riding Hood.

"But I thought you were in books," said Peter. "I never thought that you were alive."

"Why, Peter! Don't you know better than that?" asked Little Red Riding Hood. "Every one who is put into a book comes alive. That is, the good people do. The bad ones do not. Then we come to the moon to live."

Just then the Bird's voice said, "Time to go home now, Peter. Are you hungry? Pick a piece of the bush beside you. You may eat it."

Peter did as he was told. He found it the sweetest candy that he had ever tasted. All at once he began to grow sleepy. As soon as he had climbed upon the Fairy Bird's back he fell fast asleep.

At last the Bird woke him. "We are home, Peter," said he. "Get in at the window. Then climb into bed."

"Good-by," said Peter. "I have had such a good time."

But the Fairy Bird did not answer. He was gone.

Peter walked across the room. He tried to climb into bed. He slipped and fell on the floor with a bang.

Mother ran in. "Why, Peter!" she cried. "You have tumbled out of bed again."

"No," said Peter. "I was just trying to get into bed. I have been to the moon."

Then he told mother about it. She said, "You have been dreaming."

"But see this piece of candy in my hand," said Peter. "I got it from a bush in the moon."

Mother looked at it. She thought that she had seen it before. She thought that she had given it to him. But, of course, she did not say so.

Instead, she said, "Go to sleep now, Peter, or you will be very tired after your ride to the moon. To-morrow you can tell Polly all about it."

THE CYCLONE CELLAR

One day Polly said to Peter, "I know what let's do. Let's dig a hole in the ground. Then, when the wind blows hard, we can get into it."

"Why?" asked Peter. "It won't blow down our house. It doesn't blow so hard here. Father said so."

"I know it, Peter. But you can never tell. Maybe it will sometime. Let's dig the hole, anyway."

"Where?" asked Peter.

"Oh, out in the garden. I'll show you. Come on."

Peter took his little hoe and a trowel. Polly took her small spade. They found a fine place to dig and set to work.

Polly marked a circle on the ground. This was for the opening of the hole.

Peter began to dig with his hoe. Polly took the loose dirt away with her spade. Soon they really had made quite a large hole.

Then Polly sat down on the edge and worked with her trowel.

The next day they worked more, and the next and the next. At last Peter and Polly could get into the hole together.

Father called it their "cyclone cellar." He said, "Are you watching for that storm? The kind that blows down houses is called a cyclone. Don't let it catch you. Jump right into your cyclone cellar when it comes."

"I wish a big wind would come, Polly," said Peter.

"Why, Peter Howe, should you like to find your house blown away?"

"No," said Peter. "I did not think of that. Let's play something else."

"I know what," said Polly. "Let's dig this hole right down deep. If we dig far enough, we can get to China."

"All right," said Peter. So they made the hole still deeper.

One day Peter said, "Polly, we can never get to China. Let's play something else."

"I know what, Peter. Let's dig a tunnel. If we dig far enough, we can get to Tim's house. Maybe we can find some gold or silver on the way.

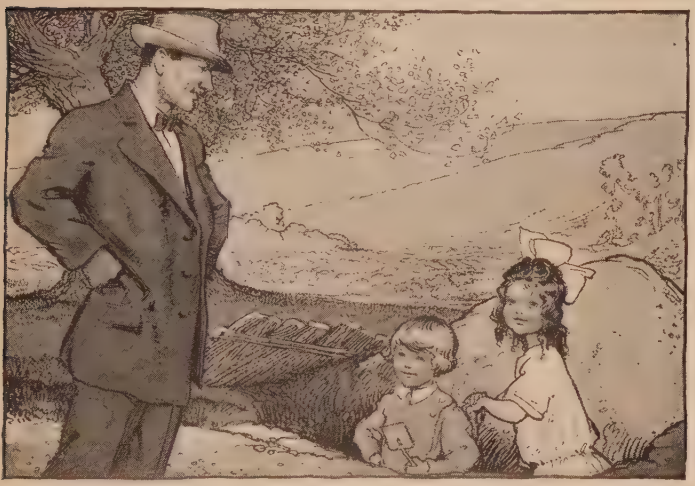
"Sometimes people hide their money in the ground to keep it safe. Then they forget where they have put it."

So the children again set to work. They dug and dug and dug. Almost every fine day they spent a little time in their hole.

Father made a cover for the top. This kept out the water.

He said, "You are worse than woodchucks, children. See the pile of dirt you have made. What shall I do with it?"

"We will put it in the road, father."



"No," said father. "That is good dirt. It belongs in our garden. We will keep it here."

One day Peter said to Polly, "Are we almost up to Tim's house now? I don't want to dig any more. We don't find any gold or silver or anything. Let's play something else."

"Oh, Peter, we are not nearly up to Tim's yet. We are not out of this corner of the garden. Let me dig. I like to."

Just then Peter's trowel struck something hard. He scraped away the dirt. It was the corner of a box.

"Oh, Peter, Peter!" cried Polly. "What have you found? It's a box. Maybe it is full of gold or silver. Hurry and dig it up."

At last the box was pulled out. It was very small. It was made of tin. It was not heavy. It would not open. Something inside rattled.

"What's in it?" said Peter.

Polly cried, "Oh, I know it's money! I know it is! Let's find father. He will open it for us."

Father was just coming up the hill with Grandmother Howe. He heard the children's story. He took the box and shook it gently.

"Open it, open it!" cried Polly, jumping up and down.

So father opened it. And guess what! Inside were four, very old, silver dollars.

"Oh, goody, goody!" cried Polly.

"Oh, goody, goody!" cried Peter.

"Well, I never!" said father. "Now where do you suppose these old silver dollars came from?"

Grandmother said, "Years ago there was a house where your garden is. My father told me so. The house was burned long before I was born.

"Perhaps the box was lost at that time. It must have been thrown into the old cellar with the dirt which was used to fill it."

"Well, Peter, well, Polly, then these dollars are yours. They are very old. They are not like the dollars we have now. I think, perhaps, they are worth more than a dollar apiece. We shall see. Now let's show them to mother."

TIMOTHY AND REDTOP

Around Peter's home is a large field. It belongs to Mr. Howe. It is his hayfield. In the summer he has the grass cut. The sun and the wind make the cut grass into hay.

The hay is carried into the barn. In the winter Mary, the bay horse, and Black Bess, the cow, live in the barn.

They must be fed. They cannot any longer get grass for themselves. The hay from Mr. Howe's field will help feed them. Their grain he will buy at the grain store.

Peter and Polly like this hayfield. All the year it is a pleasant place. Here they slide on the crust in winter. Here they pick blue violets in the spring.

In the summer the grass grows tall. Then they cannot run about the field. If they did, they would trample it.

So they sit on the fence and look at the tall grass. They watch the wind bend it down. They watch the birds fly into it. They smell the sweet clover blossoms.

Bobolinks live in this field. Their nests are built on the ground. Polly and Peter think that they know where some of the nests are.

So often they have seen the bobolinks fly down into the grass. But, of course, they can never go to look.

"The grass is the roof of their nests," said Polly to Peter. "So I hope the little bobolinks will hatch soon."

Peter called to a bird, "Mr. Bobolink, when father cuts the grass, where will your roof be?"

But Mr. Bobolink did not stop to talk. He flew away over Peter's head. As he flew he sang, "Bobolink, bobolink, spink, spank, spink."

Perhaps he said, "My little ones are growing fast. They will all learn to fly before our roof is cut down. Don't you worry about them, Peter."

Timothy.

In the hayfield are two kinds of grasses. There are also two kinds of clover. All these together make very good hay.

Peter and Polly know the two grasses by name. One is called timothy; the other is called redtop.

Redtop.

Now Polly has red hair. Sometimes, to tease her, the children call her "Redtop."

One day Polly's

father told her about timothy and redtop.

Polly said, "It teases me to be called 'Redtop.' I hope it does not tease the grass.

"It is a pretty grass because its top is red. When it is ripe it is as pretty as a flower. I know I can remember its name. And I can remember timothy, too. That is like Tim's name."

"So it is," said father. "And, Polly, your red hair is pretty, too. It is just as pretty as the redtop grass. Do you think that it isn't?

"The children only call you 'Redtop' for fun. They do not mean to be unkind. I like your red hair. It is so bright and shiny that you look like a sunbeam."

"Then I will be your sunbeam, father," said Polly.

"That is right, Polly. It is good to have one sunbeam that will always shine. When it rains, you must shine brighter than ever. Can you do this for father?"

"I think I can, father. I will try. And now perhaps I shall be glad that I have red hair."

MAKING HAY

One evening Mr. Howe said, "We will begin to cut our grass to-morrow. I think that we shall have a pleasant day."

"Oh, goody, goody!" cried Polly.

"Oh, goody, goody!" cried Peter.

"The timothy is ripe. The redtop is ripe. If the sun will shine and dry the grass, we shall have some good hay."

"I will shine, father," said Polly. "I am a sunbeam, you know. Maybe I can help dry the grass."

"Then shine all you can, Little Sunbeam. Perhaps the west wind will work with you to dry it."

Early the next morning the mowing began. The mowing machine was pulled by two horses. The man who owned the machine drove them. Mr. Howe hired him to cut the grass.

The knives on the machine cut it close to the ground. Up one side of the field went

the machine. Down the other side it came. Always it left behind a line of cut grass. This lay on the ground and dried in the sun and wind.

After it was partly dry, another machine went up and down the field. This machine tossed all the cut hay about. Then the grass that had been underneath had a chance to dry.

Peter and Polly watched the mowing. They watched the piece of standing grass grow smaller and smaller. They liked to see the grass fall. They liked very much the sweet smell of the drying hay.

"Mr. Bobolink's roof is almost gone," said Peter.

"I don't believe he cares," said Polly. "His children are quite large now."

In the afternoon Peter and Polly went again to the field. The grass that was first mowed was drying well. Now the other machine was spreading it.

"Oh, see, Polly," said Peter. "It is kicking up behind. It is tossing the grass all about."

Polly asked a man who was working in the field, "Will it be dry to-night?"

"Some of it will. But we are going to leave it all out to-night. To-morrow we shall take it into the barn."

The next morning the sun shone bright.

"We shall have another good day," said Mr. Howe. "The farmers who are haying will be glad. Every pleasant day helps them. Our hay will be in by supper time."

In the night the dew had fallen upon the hay. The warm sun soon dried it. Then still another machine was driven around the field. This was the raking machine. It raked the hay into long rows.

After this, men went about with pitchforks. They piled the rows of hay into haycocks.

Then came a big hay wagon into the field. The hay was all made, and it was time to carry it to the barn.

Peter and Polly were playing among the haycocks. They watched the men load. One man stood on top of the wagon. Two men stood on the ground.

They lifted the haycocks up on their pitchforks. The man on the wagon took the hay with his pitchfork. He spread it over the wagon and packed it down nicely.

"Oh, Peter," said Polly, "the load is getting higher and higher. See, they are coming to get our haycocks next."

When the cart was full enough, the horses drew it to the barn. There the men unloaded the hay into the loft. At the same time another wagon was being filled in the field.

Late in the afternoon the last load was

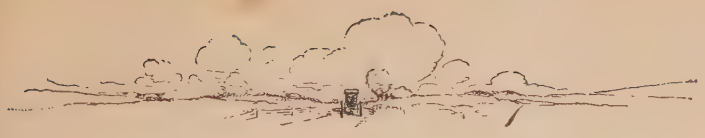
ready to go to the barn. Then one of the men called to Peter and Polly.

"Come here, children. I will put you on top of this load. You may ride on it to the barn."

The children sank down in the soft hay. The ride was not a long one, but they thought it great fun.

At supper father said, "Well, chicks, have we some good hay? Is there enough for Mary and Black Bess, too?"

"We think so, father," said Peter. "And we have had fun all day. I like to make hay. When I am a man, I think I shan't make daisy hay. I'd rather make good hay like yours, father."



POLLY'S TURTLE

One day the Story Lady said to Polly, "Will you go to drive with me? Your mother says that you may."

"Oh, will you take me, Story Lady? When shall we go?"

"Get your coat and come now. You may help me harness my horse."

Polly ran into the house to get her coat. "Good-by, mother," she said. "I am going now with the Story Lady."

"Wait a minute, Polly," said mother. "I have a bag of cookies for you to take. You will be gone all the afternoon."

Polly said, "Thank you," and ran off with the cookies.

Soon she and the Story Lady started. At the store they stopped. "Good-by, father," called Polly. "I am going to drive."

"Good-by, Polly. Tell me all about it when you get home."

It was a lovely day. The sky was very

blue. Great puffy white clouds sailed above their heads.

"See the wind blow those clouds, Polly. They are flying toward the east. That means the wind is from the west. It is a good hay day."

"My father is all through haying," said Polly. "He has only one field. But Farmer Brown is not through. He has a big farm. Are we going past there?"

"No, we will go past the pond and up the hill."

"Oh, see the chipmunk, Story Lady! He is running along beside us on the fence."

"There are two of them, Polly. Can you see the other? He is sitting on his hind legs. He has something in his fore paws. Perhaps it is a seed.

"See how his cheeks are puffed out. He looks as if he had a toothache. But he hasn't.

"He has stuffed his mouth full of something — perhaps more seeds. Poor chipmunk has no pockets. He uses his mouth instead."

"There is a woodpecker," said Polly. "I know him. He is digging for food. He digs with his bill. Sometimes a little woodpecker comes to our trees. I have seen him. He is black and white."

They drove past the pond. Men were fishing in it. One showed them a large pickerel that he had just caught.

There were white water lilies in the pond. But one could not reach them from the shore.

They went up a long hill and through some lovely woods. Here they stopped at a spring to drink. The spring was near the side of the road. The water bubbled up from the bottom.

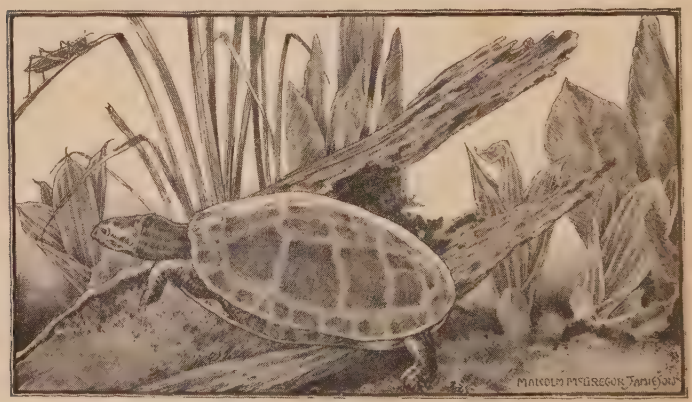
The Story Lady said, "Here is a little paper cup for you to drink from, Polly. I will drink from this one."

How good the cool, clear water was!

"I am hungry now," said Polly. "Let's eat our cookies." So they did, and then they drove on.

All at once Polly said, "What is that in the road?"

"Why, I do believe it's a turtle, Polly. Do you want to take it home to Peter? I'll get it if you do."



Polly said, "Yes." So the Story Lady got out. She took the turtle up by its shell. It was as large as a saucer.

"See him curl his legs under his shell, Polly. See him hide his funny tail and his

head. I'll put him on the bottom of the wagon on his back. He will be safe there."

Now Mr. Turtle did not like to ride on his back. After a time he stretched out his long neck. He put his nose on the floor of the wagon. He gave a push, and over he went, right side up.

Then he began to walk about. Polly and the Story Lady had forgotten him. So he was free to do as he liked. He walked from one end of the wagon to the other.

Near the front he found some strange things in his way. These were the Story Lady's shoes.

He thought he would climb over them. So he pulled himself up on the shoes. Then he put his claws into the stockings. But the Story Lady felt that.

"What is biting me?" she cried. She looked down. She found Mr. Turtle trying to crawl across her feet.

"Well, old fellow," she said, "were you lonely? Your claws are very sharp. Lie over on your back until we get home."

After that they watched the turtle. He did not have a chance to try that trick again.

BLACKY

Polly and Peter have many pets. Wag-wag is one of them. Besides Wag-wag, they have a cat. The cat is named Blacky.

Mother gave Blacky to them. She was then only a kitten. Mother said, "Children, here is a pet for you. You may have her for your very own.

"You must be good to her. You must take care of her. I give you food three times a day. You must feed her three times a day.

"I always remember to do this for you. You must always remember to do it for her. If you have pets, you must be kind to them. If you cannot be kind to them, you cannot have them."

So Polly and Peter took care of Blacky. Now she is a big cat.

Wag-wag and Blacky are friends. At first Blacky did not like Wag-wag. When she saw him, her tail grew big. Her fur stood out. She curled up her back. She showed her claws. She spit at him.

Perhaps she had seen her mother act so. But that was long ago. She was only a baby cat then.

Soon she was used to Wag-wag. She played with him. She chased him round and round. She liked to hit him with her paws. But she did not scratch him. She kept her claws well hidden.

Wag-wag liked to tease Blacky. Sometimes he stole her food from her plate. He would try to find her asleep. He liked to creep near softly. Then he liked to bark in her ear. He thought it fun to see her jump.

But the cat and the dog are really good friends. They do not hurt each other.

One day Mr. Howe said, "Children, I know something. I know where there are four kittens. They are Blacky's kittens. She has hidden them in the hay. Come, and I will show them to you."

"Oh, goody, goody!" said Polly.

"Oh, goody, goody!" said Peter.

They went to the barn. They climbed the stairs to the hayloft. Mr. Howe took them to a dark corner.

There lay Blacky. She was curled up in

the hay. Close beside her were four kittens. They were fast asleep.

Blacky saw the children. She began to purr. That waked her babies. They moved about and mewed. They were hungry.

Polly and Peter had never seen such little kittens. They were very much pleased.

"See their funny pointed tails, father," said Polly. "Why can't they stand up on their legs? And oh, they are all blind!"

"They will not be blind by and by, Polly. They will open their eyes in a few days. The light is not good for them yet. You see Blacky knows that. She has made her home in a dark corner."

"May we take the kittens to the house, father?"

"In a few weeks you may. But we will leave them in the hay now. You may come here and see them. Blacky will not mind. She knows that you will not hurt them."

"May we play with them?"

"You may when they are older. It is not good for them to be handled yet. They are too little. But you must be sure to give Blacky all the food she will eat. For now she has her kittens to feed."

"Let us name them," said Polly. "There is just one apiece to name."

"We will at supper time. You may be thinking of names until then," said father.

THE FOUR KITTENS

At supper Polly said, "Now let us name the kittens. You name first, mother."

"I choose a gray one," said mother. "I will call her White-foot. She has just one white foot."

"Now, Peter, name yours," said Polly.

"I choose the black one," said Peter. "I will call her Black Baby. She looks just like Blacky."

"Now, father, it is your turn."

"Well, Polly, I will take the other gray one. His name shall be Gray Brother."

"Then the black and white one is mine," said Polly. "But I cannot think of a name yet. I could have named all the others. I shall like him best."

The kittens grew and grew. Soon they were blind no longer. Their eyes had opened. Polly and Peter went to see them every day.

The children had always liked to go to the hayloft. Now they liked it more than ever.

They liked to sit in the soft hay. They would sit very still and watch the kittens.

The kittens tried to play. Their legs were not strong. They often tumbled down when they were playing.

They had made a deep house for themselves. It was just a hole in the hay. Polly could not reach to the end.

"Father," said Polly one day, "when may we bring the kittens down?"

"Let them come down themselves. Then we shall know that Blacky thinks it is time. Perhaps the brightest will find the way first."

"Oh, I hope it will be my black and white one," said Polly. "Then I shall know what to name him."

One day Polly and Peter went to the barn. They started toward the stairs to the hayloft. What do you think they saw?

There, at the bottom of the stairs, was the black and white kitten. He was mewing as hard as he could.

At the top of the stairs were the other three kittens. They did not dare to come down. They were peeping over at the black and white one.

He was trying to climb up the stairs. He was so small that he could not. He could get down, but he could not get back. He could only open his red mouth and say, "Meow, meow."

"Oh, kitty," cried Polly, "you are the brightest of all! You are the first to find the way down. Now I know what to name you.

"You shall be Christopher, after Chris-

topher Columbus. For he first found the way to a new land." Then she carried Christopher upstairs.

Soon after this, all the kittens came downstairs. Blacky was with them. She made them a new home. It was in a box.

Then mother said, "Now the kittens must learn to lap milk."

She brought a dish of warm milk. Then she tried to teach them to lap.

Christopher learned very quickly. Whitefoot would not learn. She just walked right into the dish.

Then she sat down and licked her feet. The milk on them tasted good. So she went back to try it again.

Black Baby was there. She had one foot in the dish. She was lapping quite fast. But she kept putting her nose into the milk. This made her sneeze.

Just then Blacky came. She began to purr. All the kittens ran to her. She sat down and licked their wet paws. She cleaned them all over with her tongue.

Perhaps she told them not to walk in their food. For by and by they all learned to lap milk very nicely.

THE CAT'S VISIT TO THE MONKEYS

One day Polly showed the Story Lady the kittens. They were eating their supper.

Blacky was watching. Polly patted her, and Blacky curled her tail and purred.

"See her tail," said Polly. "She curls it at the end. It looks like a buttonhook. She often does it. I wonder why."

"I can tell you a 'Once upon a time' story about it, Polly. Shall I?"

"Oh, please do, Story Lady."

So the Story Lady began: "Once upon a time there was a Cat. She was a very hard working Cat. She caught all the mice in her house. She caught all the mice in her barn. She did this at night.

"In the daytime she sat in the yard. She watched the chickens. She did not let the

bad birds get them. So you can see that she worked night and day.

"Since she was a little kitten, she had never played with her tail. She had never stolen cream. She had never taken things from the table. She had not had time for any of these nice games. She had done nothing but work.

"One day she said to herself, 'I am so

tired of working night and day. I must take a vacation. I shall soon be old. I will go and enjoy myself while I am young.

"'Where shall I go? Let me see. I must think of a place where no one works. I wish to play, play, play for a long time.'

"At last she thought of her tenth cousins, the Monkeys.

"She said to herself, 'I will go to see my Monkey cousins. Every one knows that they never work. They do not know enough to do so. They play and play. They will let me play with them.'

"So she packed her clothes and started. She traveled many days. At last she came to a thick wood. She knew that she was near the end of her journey.

"Her tenth cousins, the Monkeys, were very glad to see her. They said, 'Now you can teach us to work. We wish to know how to build houses.'

"'No,' said the Cat. 'I cannot teach you that. Other people build houses. I only live in them. But I can teach you how to catch mice.'

"'We do not care to learn that,' said the Monkeys. 'We have no mice to

catch. Can you teach us to speak as men do?'

"'No,' said the Cat. 'I never could learn that myself. But I can teach you how to climb up and down trees.'

"'We do not care to have you,' said the Monkeys. 'We can do that already, and even faster than you.'

"'I am not sure that you can,' said the Cat. 'Let us try.'

"So the Cat and the Monkeys started up the trees as fast as they could go. They all reached the top at the same time.

"Then the Monkeys said, 'Let us quarrel about who reached the top first.'

"'No,' said the Cat. 'I came here to play, not to work. It would be work to quarrel. Let us play something else.'

"So the Monkeys showed the Cat all their tricks. They showed her how to pick nuts. They showed her how to throw these on the heads of people under the trees.

"They showed her how to jump from one tree to another. They showed her how to frighten sleeping birds at night time.

"The Cat played all these games until she was tired.

"At last she said, 'Cousins, if there are no new games, I must go home. I have played long enough.'

"The Monkeys said, 'There is one other game. We have never taught it to any one. We think that no one can learn it.'

"'Show me,' said the Cat. 'I can learn it. I can learn all your silly games.'

"'Very well,' said the Monkeys. 'But don't blame us if you get hurt.'

"Then they showed her how they could hang by their tails. They curled their tails around a branch and swung and swung.

"'Pooh!' said the Cat. 'I, too, have a tail. It is as good as yours. Let me try.'

"But her tail would not curl around the branch tightly. She fell to the ground. She tried again and again, while the Monkeys sat near and laughed. At last she grew quite cross to think that she could not learn.

"She said, 'Cousins, I will go home now. But I shall keep on trying. When I have learned how, I shall come and show you.'

"So from that day to this she has tried to curl her tail. But she has never visited the Monkeys again."

PIN-SCISSORS

One day Polly said to her mother, "Mother, I have lost my scissors. What shall I do?"

"Why not hunt for them, Polly? Hunt until you find them."

So Polly hunted. She looked all over the house. At last she found them. They were on the sofa. They had slipped almost out of sight between the back and the seat.

Polly put her fingers into the crack to pull them out. She felt something in the crack. It was a cent!

Then she felt again. Perhaps she could find another cent. But no! She found only a pencil, a button, and some pins.

At supper she told her father about the crack. She told him about her scissors. Then she showed him the cent, the pencil, the button, and the pins.

"Mother says I may have them all," said Polly.

"And so you may," said father. "You

are a good hunter. Now get Peter and come with me. I will show you how we can make scissors out of your pins."

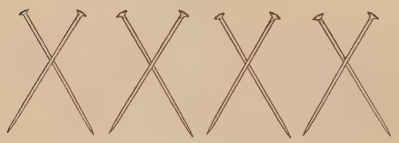
Father and Polly and Peter went down to the railroad tracks. Polly and Peter thought this was great fun.

They were not allowed to play near the tracks. They had to cross them, when they went to the store.

First, they must always stop and look for a train. Then they must hurry across. But now father stayed near the tracks.

"It is nearly time for a train," he said. "Give me some pins, Polly."

He placed eight pins upon the car rails. He placed them like this:



"Oh, father," said Polly, "the train will run over them."

"That is just what we wish, Polly. What do you think it will do to the pins?"

"Spoil them," said Polly.

"Yes, it will spoil them for pins. But it will make scissors of them."

"Real scissors, father?"

"Just play scissors, Polly. I'm afraid you cannot cut with them. Here comes the train. We will sit on this bank. Then we can watch it.

"I will tell you something. We may put pins on the track. But we must never, never put any big thing there. We must not put stones or sticks. They might make the train run off the track. Then people might be hurt. You must remember this, chicks."

Polly and Peter liked to watch the train. It stopped in front of the station.

"The engine says 'puff, puff.' I think it is out of breath," said Polly. "It has to run so fast."

By and by the engine started. It went over the pins. Then the wheels of the cars went over them, too.

The children could hardly wait until the train was gone. They wished so much to see their scissors.

They ran to the place. Yes, indeed, father was right. The pins were not pins, but scissors.

They were no longer round. The great wheels had pressed them flat. And every two pins were joined together.

The children now had four pairs of scissors like this:

"How heavy the cars must be, father."

"Yes, Polly. Do you see now why you must keep away from the trains?"

"Oh, yes," said Polly. "Those great wheels would crush me. But we do keep away, father."

"You are good children," said father. "Now we will go and show our scissors to grandmother. Then it will be bed-time."

PETER'S FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

It is September. Summer is almost gone. School will begin soon.

Polly has said over and over, "Mother, may I go to school this year?

"I am seven years old. I think I am old enough. Besides I can read and write a little already."

At first mother said, "We will see." Then she said, "Yes, Polly, father and I think that you are now old enough."

Then Peter said, "Mother, is Polly going to school? I want to go, too. I can't play all alone."

"You will not have to, Peter. You can play with Wag-wag, and you can play with Tim."

"But I want Polly. I want to go to school with Polly."

Father said, "You are too little yet, my son. You will not like it. But we will let

you go with Polly. Then you can see for yourself that you are too little."

When the day came, Peter and Polly set out for the school. They were quite early. By and by most of the children in the village had come to the schoolhouse. Only the little ones were left at home.

Peter was the smallest at school. Some of the big boys laughed at him, because he was so small. They said, "You'd better run home and take your nap, Peter."

But the teacher did not laugh at him. She was Miss Barnes. She knew Peter quite well.

She gave him a seat. Then she let him cut out pictures. At first Peter thought it great fun. After a while, he grew tired of sitting still. He almost wished to go home.

Polly was having a good time. She had some new books. She liked them very much. Father had taught her to read. She could write and do number work, too.

At recess Peter said to Polly, "I think I shall go home now."

"Oh, Peter, you don't know much about

school, do you? You cannot go until noon. Nobody in this school goes until then."

"I shall," said Peter. "I guess I don't want to come to school."

Just then the bell rang. Recess was over. Polly hurried Peter into the schoolhouse. He took his seat and looked very cross.

This time Miss Barnes let Peter trace some pictures. Then he colored them with colored pencils.

He liked this very well for a short time. But he grew tired of it. He looked out of

the window. He could see the leaves moving in the breeze.

He thought, "I should like to be out under that tree. I wish I could sit down in the grass. How hard this seat is! I am hungry, too. I want a glass of milk. I do not like to come to school. I am not old enough."

He was so sorry for himself that he began to cry.

"Why, Peter, what is the matter?" asked Miss Barnes. "Are you sick?"

"No," said Peter. "But I am so hungry, and my seat is so hard. I want to go home. May I?"

"Of course you may, Peter," said Miss Barnes. "I knew you came for just a little while. You are too small to stay here all day. You may come and visit us sometimes. Now good-by."

Peter said, "Good-by," and ran home. He was very glad to be out of school.

"Mother, mother," he shouted, "I am too little to go to school. I will play with Wag-wag and Tim. Please give me some milk to drink. I am very hungry. Then I will go to find Tim."

JACK-O'-LANTERNS

In Mr. Howe's garden grew some corn. In the corn grew pumpkins. Peter and Polly like pumpkins. They were glad when their father planted the seed.

They watched the vines grow and grow. They watched the yellow flowers. They saw these flowers wither, and the little pumpkins form.

After that, Polly picked out a pumpkin for her own. Then Peter picked out one for his own.

They said to father, "May we have these pumpkins for ours? May we do just as we like with them?"

Father said, "Why, yes. Are you going to ask mother to make pumpkin pies? Or are you going to make Jack-o'-lanterns?"

"They are for Jack-o'-lanterns, father. Will you make them for us?"

"Yes, I will, when the pumpkins are nice and yellow," said father.

The pumpkins grew and grew. One day Polly said, "Peter, if your pumpkin grows any more, it will be too big. You cannot carry it."

"Then I will take it around in my cart," said Peter.

Peter's pumpkin did not stop growing. But Peter did not care.

One day father picked all the pumpkins. They were as yellow as could be. He put them in a pile on the barn floor.

Polly carried her pumpkin to the house. Peter could not carry his; it was too heavy. Father carried it for him.

They all sat down on the back piazza. Then father began to make the Jack-o'-lanterns. He first cut covers in the tops. Polly and Peter helped scoop out the inside. Then father cut faces like these:

After this, he stuck a candle in each.

When it was dark, Polly said, "Now, may we go around and show our lanterns?"

"You may go to one house," said mother. "Then you must come home."

The children went out to light their lanterns. "Where shall we go, Peter? Shall we go to show Tim? Oh, I know! Let's go to Mrs. White's. She will like to see them. She must be lonely all by herself."

Now Mrs. White did not live far away. She was a friend of Peter's and Polly's. She did not like other children. She said

they made too much noise. She said they were always in the way. But she was kind to Peter and Polly.

The children put Peter's lantern on his cart, and set off down the road. At Mrs. White's they stopped. They left the cart by the side of the road. They put both lanterns on the piazza steps. They knocked on the door. Then they hid behind a large bush.

Mrs. White came to the door. She saw the lanterns grinning at her. She thought some of the big boys were trying to tease her. So she took the lanterns. She carried them into the house, one after the other. Then she slammed the door.

"Oh, Polly, my lantern," said Peter. "It's gone."

"Oh, Peter, my lantern," said Polly. "She has it. But she would give them back, if she knew they were ours. Let's go and tell her."

So the children knocked on the door once more. "Come in," said Mrs. White. She would not go to the door again. "Why, Peter! Why, Polly! How do you do?"

"We came to tell you about the lanterns,

Mrs. White. They are ours. We did not mean to bother you. We just wanted you to see them."

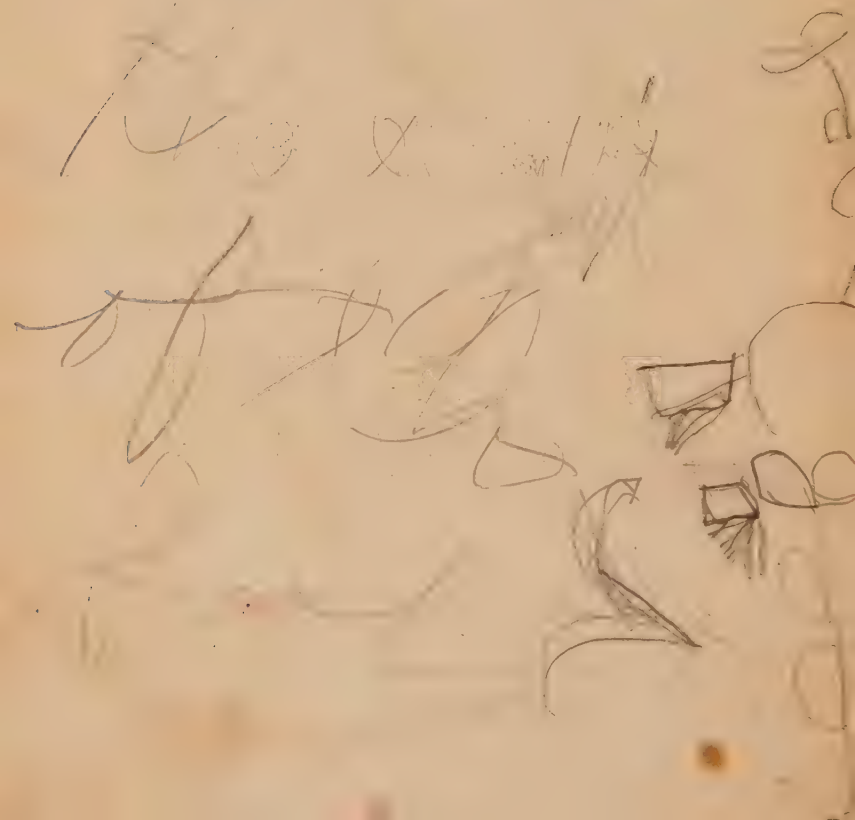
"Are these yours?" asked Mrs. White. "They are fine lanterns. I like them very much. How did you get that big one down here?"

"It came in the cart," said Peter. "Will you help us carry it out to the road?"

"To be sure I will. And here are some sticks of candy. I bought them for you

to-day at Large Village. I thought you might come to see me soon. Perhaps your mother will let you eat your candy to-morrow. Come to see me again with your lanterns."

So Peter and Polly climbed the hill with their Jack-o'-lanterns. They were very happy. They felt quite sure that Mrs. White had been glad to see them.



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